MARVEL
2
PARENTAL ADVISORY
CONAN
BATTLE FOR THE SERPENT CROWN
AHMED
ROSS
WOODARD

STRANDED IN THE MODERN WORLD, CONAN HAS PLEDGED NOT TO RETURN HOME UNTIL HE FINDS AND SLAYS THE CURSED WIZARD KULAN GATH. HIS TRAVELS LED HIM TO LAS VEGAS, WHERE HE SEARCHED FOR FUNDS. WHILE ATTEMPTING TO ROB AN ARMORED TRUCK, HE ENCOUNTERED THIEF NYLA SKIN.

NYLA OFFERED TO TEAM UP WITH CONAN TO ROB THE NEARBY HOTEL INFERNO, WHERE NYLA COULD USE HIS HELP TO ROB THE STASH OF IMUS CHAMPION, WHICH INCLUDED A SPECIAL RING CHAMPION HAD STOLEN FROM HER FRIEND. BUT ONCE CONAN AND NYLA ARRIVED AT THE HOTEL, THEY CROSSED PATHS WITH THE BLACK CAT, WHO WAS HUNTING FOR THE SAME LOOT! BUT EVEN AS THE BATTLE OVER THE TREASURE HEATS UP, IT SEEMS Cchampion'S SCHEME WITH MEPHISTO IS JUST GETTING UNDER WAY...

CONAN
BATTLE FOR THE SERPENT CROWN

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NOTE: THE EVENTS OF THIS STORY TAKE PLACE BEFORE GHOST RIDER (2019) #1

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The Hotel Inferno.
Las Vegas.
IN RECENT WEEKS, CONAN HAS FOUND HIMSELF ABDUCTED BY FATE, HOUNDED BY DARK MAGIC, AND ASSAULTED BY UNFATHOMABLE ENEMIES.
BUT TODAY, SOMETHING WORSE HAS HAPPENED.
TODAY, SOMEONE ELSE HAS STOLEN THAT WHICH CONAN SET OUT TO STEAL...
WHAT TREACHERY--
LOOKING FOR THESE? GUESS I GOT HERE FIRST, HANDSOME.
IS THIS ENTIRE CITY OVERRUN WITH THIEVES, THEN?
WELL, YES. IT'S VEGAS. BUT NONE OF 'EM ARE LIKE ME, BEEFY.

CONAN! IF YOU'D ACTUALLY LOOK UP AT HER FACE, YOU'D SEE THAT'S THE BLACK CAT.
SHE'S NOT JUST A THIEF, SHE'S LIKE THE QUEEN OF THIEVES.
QUEEN? GOSH, THAT'S ONE OF THE SWEETEST THINGS ANYONE'S EVER SAID ABOUT ME!
RESPECT WHERE IT'S DUE, LADY. BUT THAT'S OUR SCORE.
NYLA SPEAKS TRUE. I AM WEARY AND I HAVE SPLINTERED MEN'S BONES FOR THAT WHICH YOU HOLD THERE.
WE AREN'T LEAVING WITHOUT IT.
AGREE TO DISAGREE?
CRRASSSHHH
CROM!
YOU TWO EXTREMELY ATTRACTIVE PEOPLE HAVE A GOOD NIGHT. I'M SURE CHAMPION'S MEN WILL APPRECIATE THE COMPANY!

ZZIIIP
NO!
IF I CAN HIT THEM WITH A TRACKER...
BLAM
WHUNK
SLASH
FORGET THESE GUYS! WE CAN'T LET BLACK CAT GET AWAY!

THOSE MEN WILL BE RIGHT BEHIND US.
I KNOW. WE NEED A VEHICLE.
DOWN THERE! THOSE ARE CHAMPION'S GOONS. LET'S KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.
SO I TELL HER, "YOU SHOULD SMILE MORE. YOUR FACE IS--"
HRK!
WHAT THE--
WHAM
FALL, DOG!
AAAAAAA!

OKAY, THE TRACKER I HIT THEIR HELICOPTER WITH IS MOVING NORTH. I'VE GOT AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM IN MY CLUB THAT--
PING PING PING
UH, NEVER MIND. JUST...I HAVE A WAY TO FIND THEM. SO WHEN WE DO, I THINK--
BLAM BLAM
BLAM
CHAMPION'S MEN! HOLD ON TIGHT!
WE'LL NEVER CATCH BLACK CAT WITH THESE GUYS ON OUR ASS. WE NEED SOME SPACE.
LEAVE THAT TO ME.

THE WAGONS MOVE TOO SWIFTLY, LIKE ALL THINGS IN THIS STRANGE WORLD.
BUT CONAN LEAPS, AND IT FEELS LITTLE DIFFERENT THAN JUMPING FROM ONE HORSE TO ANOTHER.
AND KILLING MEN WHO ARE TRYING TO KILL HIM?
WHY, THAT FEELS GLORIOUS, NO MATTER THE WORLD!
YOU'RE GONNA MAKE US--
SKREEEEEE
CRASH

CONAN! CONAN! DON'T YOU KNOW HOW CARS WORK? YOU CAN'T JUST KILL THE DRIVER! ARE YOU OKAY?
I AM... UNHARMED.
WELL, THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR. MEANS YOU'LL BE IN SHAPE TO ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS FROM...
...THE SCARLET SPIDER!
GREEN DUDE BAND
BOB SILVER
FOR TOM

GREEEEAT.
WORD IS, THERE'S BEEN A BURGLARY AT THE HOTEL INFERNO. YOU TWO WOULDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT, WOULD YOU?
THWIP
THWIP
WHAT FOOL'S TROUPE HAS THIS MADMAN COME FROM?
THAT'S SCARLET SPIDER-- HE'S BEEN GOING AFTER ALL THE THIEVES IN LAS VEGAS. CAREFUL-- HE'S TOUGH.
WE SHALL SEE.
THWIP
I AM SO GLAD TO HEAR I'M GETTING A REP WITH THE LAS VEGAS CRIMINAL COMMUNITY.
IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO ME!

HE MOVES LIKE LIGHTNING!
FLATTERER! YOU KNOW, I'M TRYING TO TAKE IT EASY ON YOU GUYS. BEEN WORKING ON MY ANGER...
BUT IF YOU'RE GONNA BRING SWORDS INTO IT...
WHAM
CROM!
YEAH. SPIDER-STRENGTH. SPIDER-REFLEXES, TOO. BUT I'VE BEEN EXPECTING TO CROSS PATHS WITH HIM.

SO I CAME PREPARED.
ARRRRGGGGHH! MY EYES!
CAN'T SEE--
TRICKS MET WITH TRICKS, THEN. WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE...
...FOR AN HONEST FIGHT!
GAAA!

BZZZZZTTT
AGGGHHHHH!!!

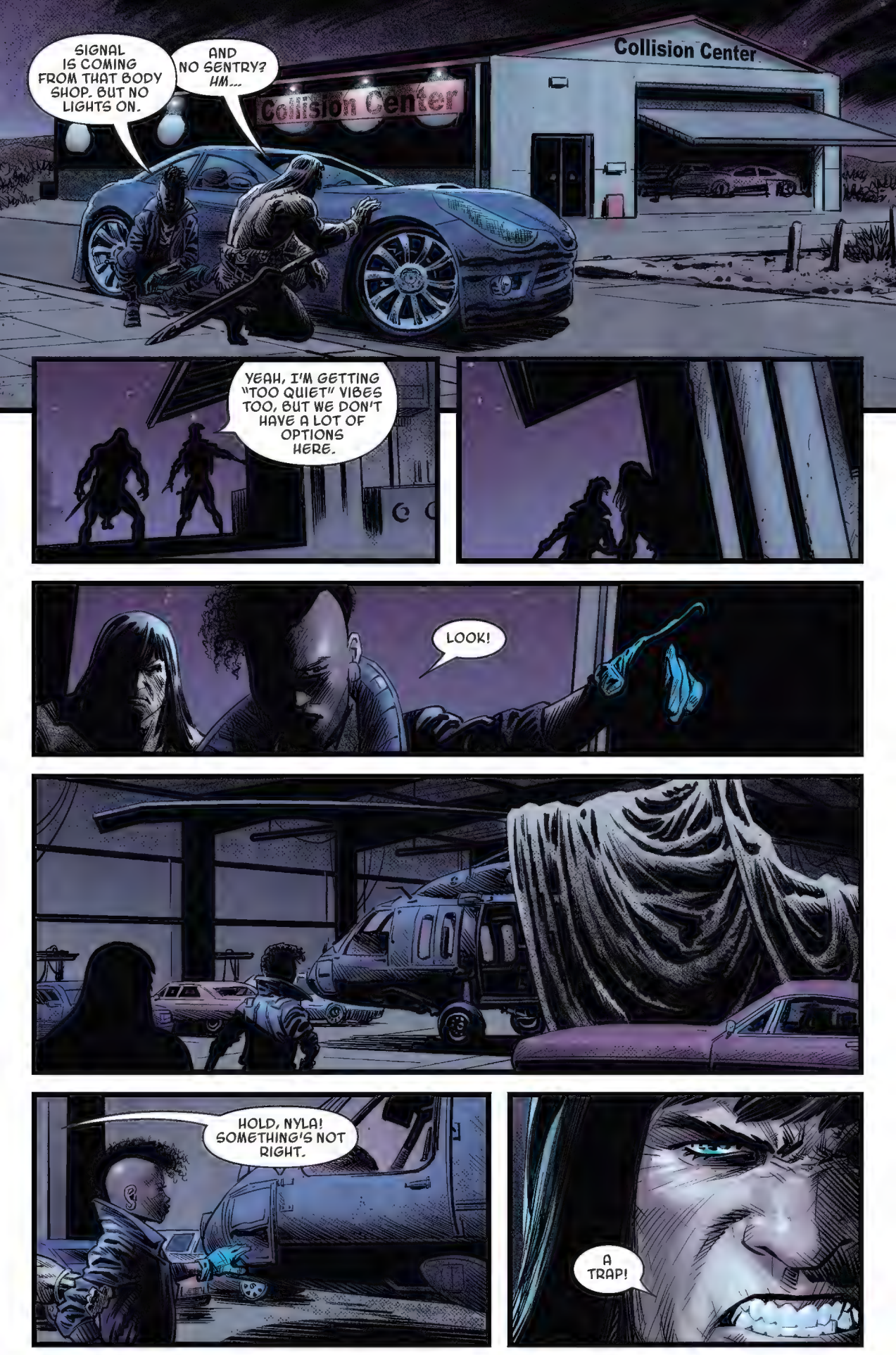
NNNHHH...
THE MAN-SPIDER IS DEFEATED...YET NOT BY MY BLADE.

THIS IS NO VICTORY. IT SMELLS TOO MUCH OF SORCERY.
PICKY, PICKY. WE KNOCKED HIS ASS OUT--THAT'S WHAT MATTERS. BUT HE WON'T BE DOWN LONG.
C'MON. WE'RE GONNA NEED NEW WHEELS.

Hotel Inferno.
THE OAF HASN'T EVEN MANAGED TO HOLD ON TO THE RING.
I'M BEGINNING TO QUESTION THE WISDOM OF THIS PLAN. MY MEN COULD--
YOUR MEN ARE USELESS FOOLS! AND THE RING WILL ONLY RESPOND TO CONAN.
YOU HAVE AN IMPRESSIVE MIND, IMUS CHAMPION. BUT DO NOT THINK TO IMPROVE ON SCHEMES LAID BY THE PRINCE OF LIES.
THE RING. THE SCEPTER. THE CROWN. THESE THINGS MUST BE DONE IN THE PROPER ORDER.
BUT SOON CONAN WILL REVEAL THAT WHICH WE SEEK... AND THEN THE EARTH WILL TREMBLE AS MEPHISTO WALKS FREE!

SO...IS THAT, LIKE, REAL FUR?
YOU GOTTA, LIKE, GET THAT $!@& DRY-CLEANED OR...?
CONAN! OVER HERE!
AT LAST.
CATCH YOU LATER, GUY.
HERE SHE IS--MY BABY. HOP IN!
YOU DON'T LOOK IMPRESSED.
THE TRANSPORTS OF THIS LAND MOVE TOO FAST AND HOWL LIKE SCREAMING DEMONS.
OH, YOU'RE GONNA LOVE MY DRIVING.

ALL RIGHT, WE'VE STILL GOT A SIGNAL, SO THAT'S GOOD. IT'S NOT MOVING ANYMORE EITHER.
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE HOLED UP IN A BODY SHOP A FEW MILES AWAY.
SHOULD BE THERE IN TEN MINUTES. YOU WANT TO TALK GAME PLAN?
WE GO TO THIS... SHOP...AND WE TAKE THE EMERALDS. QUIETLY IF IT CAN BE DONE. BLOODILY IF IT CAN'T BE.
THAT'S A GOAL, NOT A PLAN. BUT WHATEVER, WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT.
I NEED TO GET THAT RING BACK, CONAN. I OWE IT TO A DEAD FRIEND.
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHAT DO YOU NEED? BESIDES MONEY, I MEAN.
I COME FROM CIMMERIA. AND AN AGE OLDER THAN THIS REALM'S MEMORY.
NOW I HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO THIS BAFFLING ERA OF ARTIFICE AND MADNESS.
YET I WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE SO BROUGHT. AN OLD ENEMY, THE SORCERER KULAN GATH, IS ALSO HERE.
OUR FATES ARE INTERTWINED. ONCE I HAVE SLAIN HIM I CAN RETURN TO MY OWN WORLD.
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE HERE.


SIGNAL IS COMING FROM THAT BODY SHOP. BUT NO LIGHTS ON.
AND NO SENTRY? HM...
Collision Center
Collision Center
YEAH, I'M GETTING "TOO QUIET" VIBES TOO, BUT WE DON'T HAVE A LOT OF OPTIONS HERE.
LOOK!
HOLD, NYLA! SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT.
A TRAP!

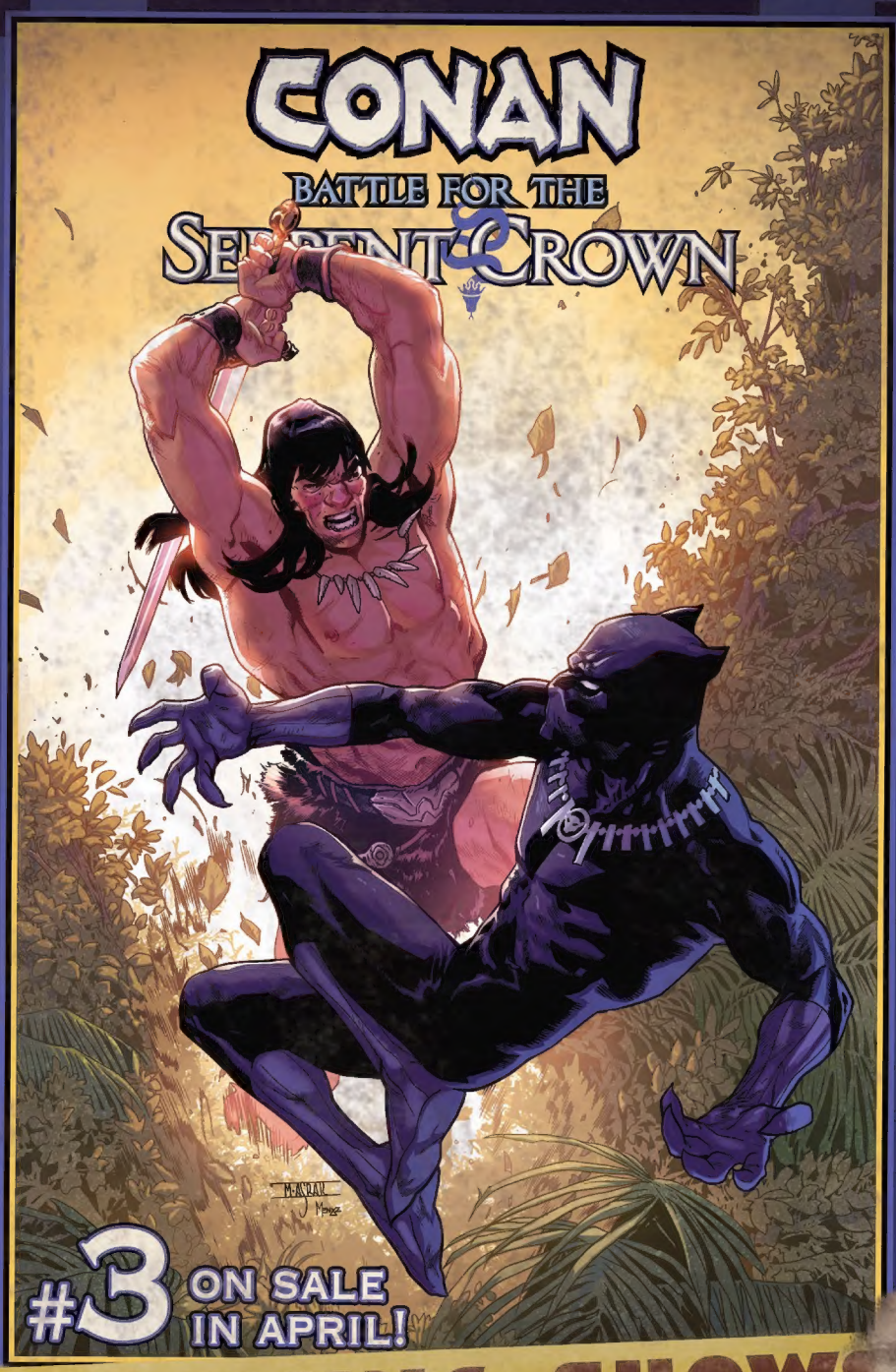
SOME SORT OF HOLO--
OWWW!
WHAT--
ZZZAP
ZZZAP
ZZZAP
ZZZAP
YOU TWO ARE THE PERSISTENT TYPE, HUH? LIGHT 'EM UP, DOCTOR KORPSE!
NYLA!
DON'T WORRY, THESE STUN PISTOLS AREN'T LETHAL. BUT THEY'RE SURE AS HELL DISCOURAGING.
UNNNNH...
CONAN'S EVERY NERVE BURSTS INTO FLAME. THE WEAPONS OF THIS WORLD ARE STRANGE TO HIM. UNFIT FOR A TRUE WARRIOR.
IT'S NOT STOPPING HIM, BOSS! MIGHT HE BE A MUTANT?
BUT PAIN IS PAIN.
AND CONAN KNOWS MORE THAN MOST THAT PAIN CAN BE CONQUERED!
GAAAAH! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

YEAH, LET'S.
CONAN IS BLINDED BY THE SHE-CAT'S TRICKS. HIS EYES ARE USELESS.
BUT HE LEARNED LONG AGO TO FIGHT IN BLACKENED CAVERNS AND BLINDING SNOWS.
TO HONE SENSES BESIDES SIGHT.
AND THOSE SENSES SERVE HIM NOW.
THIS WAY!
RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

HOLD, WOMAN!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, HANDSOME? CAN'T KEEP UP?
LOOK AT THOSE NAILS! YOU REALLY DO NEED A MANICURE, WHOEVER YOU ARE.
STOMP
CROM!
WHUMP

CLOSE BUT NO CIGAR, MUSCLES! TOODLES!
BAH! THAT'S IT, THEN? NO JEWELS? NO--
WAIT! WHAT IS--
MY RING!
HEY, THAT'S MINE!
PERHAPS THIS BAUBLE CAN--EH?
SORCERY?!
THIS SWIMMING IN MY HEAD...
WE... WE'VE BEEN TELEPORTED SOMEWHERE. I'D KNOW THE SENSATION ANYWHERE.
WHAT FOUL REALM HAVE WE BEEN WHISKED TO NOW?

LET ME SEE IF I CAN GET A SIGNAL AND FIGURE OUT...
SPIRITED AWAY BY FELL POWERS AGAIN! HOW MANY TIMES CAN SUCH A FATE BEFALL ONE MAN? SURELY I AM CURSED!
I WOULDN'T BE SO SURE. YOU NEED MONEY TO HUNT A WIZARD, RIGHT? WELL, NO PLACE ON EARTH IS RICHER--
"--THAN WAKANDA!"
To Be Continued...



UPCOMING SHOWS

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #13

PLAYING NOW!

DARK AGNES #2

PLAYING NOW!

CONAN THE BARBARIAN #14

MEPHISTO